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UNCLAS LILONGWE 000716

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
DEPT FOR EB/TRA/AN (GRIMM)

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [FAIR](#) [PREL](#) [MI](#)  
SUBJECT: OPEN SKIES AGREEMENT LOOKS CLEAR TO MFA

REF: A. STATE 155275

[1](#)B. LILONGWE 662

[1](#)1. (SBU) Minister of Foreign Affairs George Chaponda confirmed the GOM's interest in the Open Skies agreement when the Charge provide reftel A information during a July 29 meeting. Chaponda said the GOM will review the documentation provided and begin consultations with the relevant Ministries. Upon learning that other SADC member states had concluded such an agreement, Chaponda said it was "almost automatic" that the GOM would as well.

[1](#)2. (SBU) After reftel B meeting, emboff provided information packets on the Open Skies agreement to interested officials at the Ministry of Transport and Public Works, the Department of Civil Aviation, and the Department of Tourism.

COMMENT

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[1](#)3. (SBU) After initial presentations of information about the Open Skies agreement, it appears that the GOM is interested to sign, especially because of the potential code-sharing benefits. Bureaucratic inertia, however, will likely impede swift action on the agreement.  
RASPOLIC